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Furuhata

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(54) **PHYSICAL QUANTITY SENSOR ELEMENT,
PHYSICAL QUANTITY SENSOR,
ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT, AND MOVABLE
BODY**

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G01C 19/574 (2012.01)

(52) **U.S. Cl.**
CPC **G01C 19/574** (2013.01)

(58) **Field of Classification Search**
CPC G01C 19/5747; G01C 19/574
See application file for complete search history.

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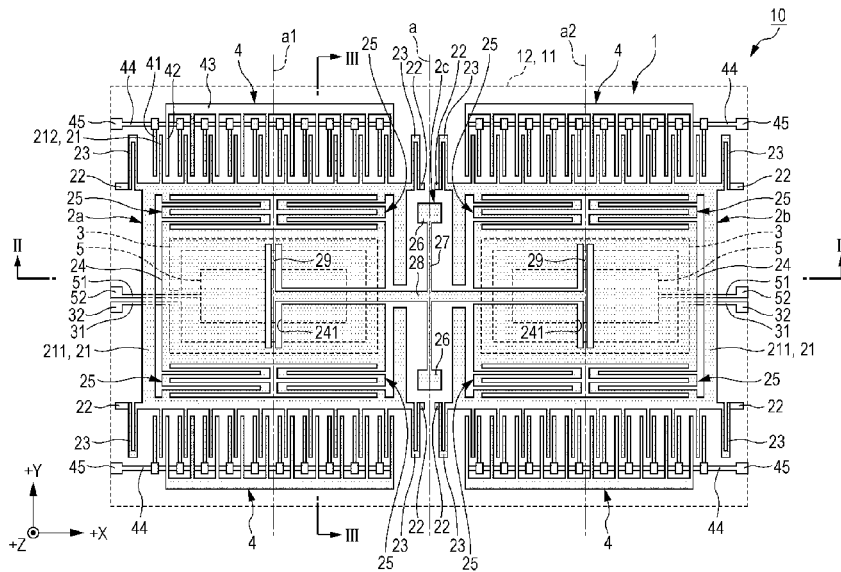
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(57) **ABSTRACT**

A physical quantity sensor element of the invention is formed into a plane-shape along an XY plane, and is provided with two driving portions which vibrate in a Z-axis direction, two detecting portions, four beam portions which connect one driving portion and one detecting portion, four beam portions which connect the other detecting portion and the other driving portion, and a coupling portion of which one end is connected to a portion in one of the driving portion and the other end is connected to a portion in the other driving portion in which the each of the deriving portions includes a beam portion which is connected to the end portion of the coupling portion and is deformable so as to reduce a change of a posture of each of the driving portions with respect to an XY plane.

15 Claims, 7 Drawing Sheets



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FIG. 3

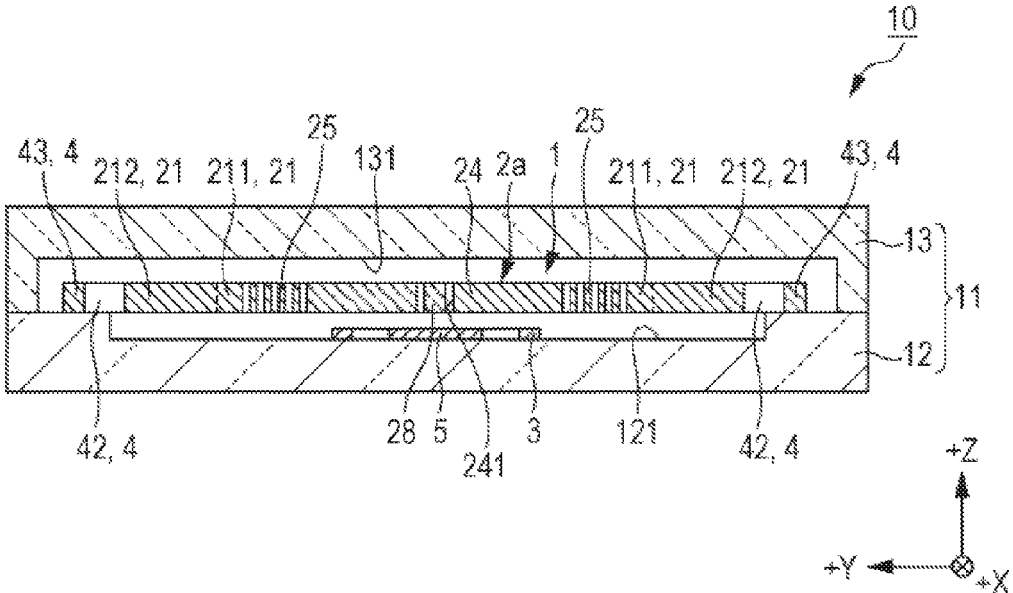


FIG. 5

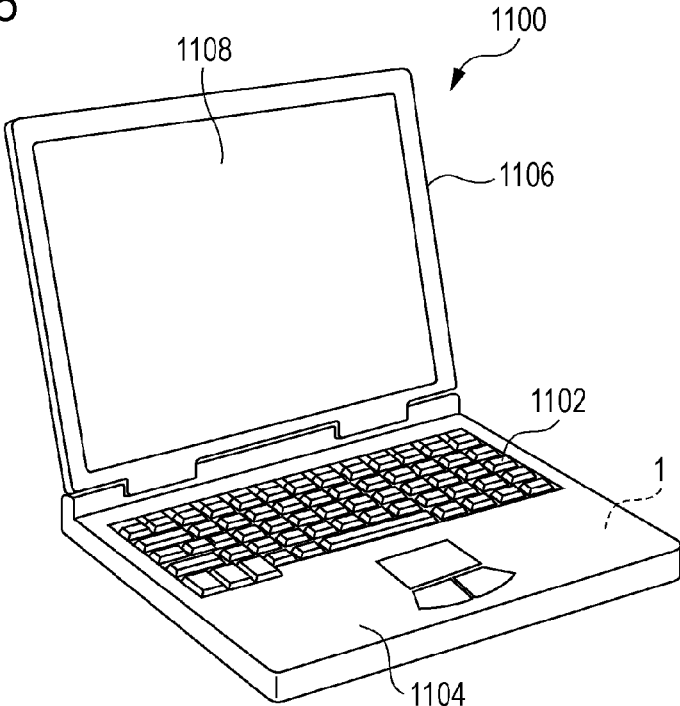


FIG. 6

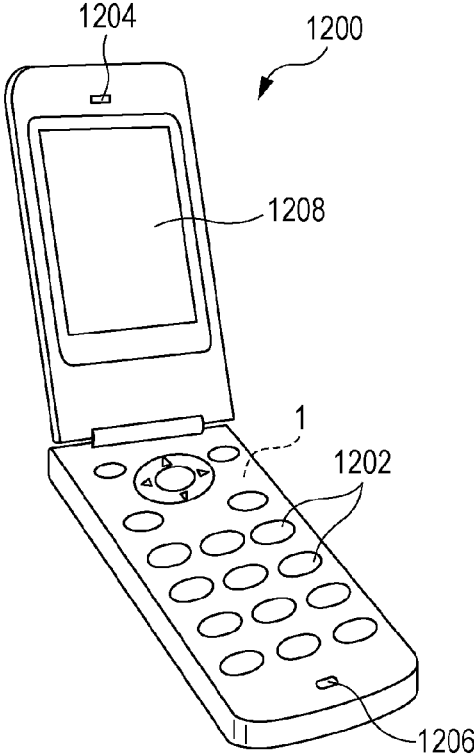


FIG. 7

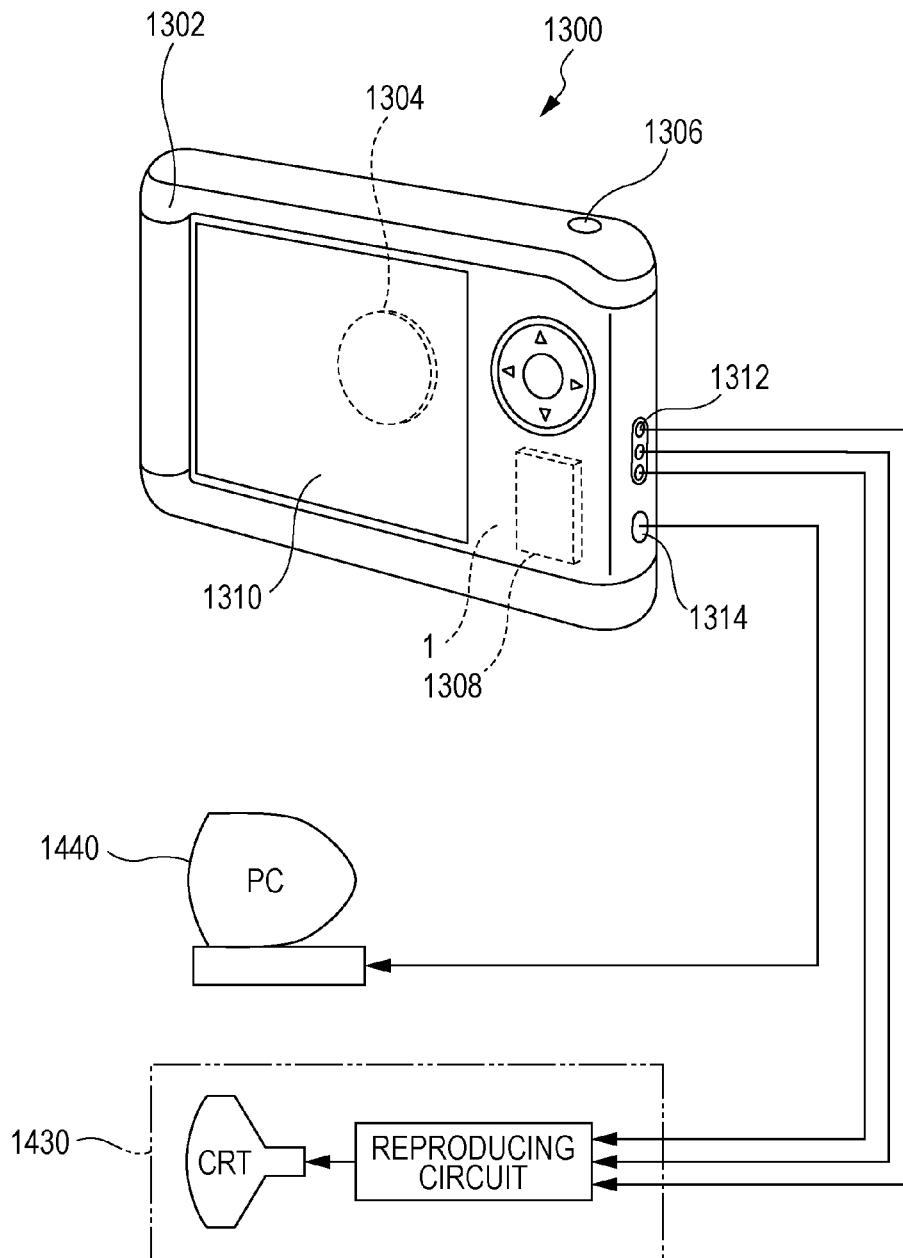
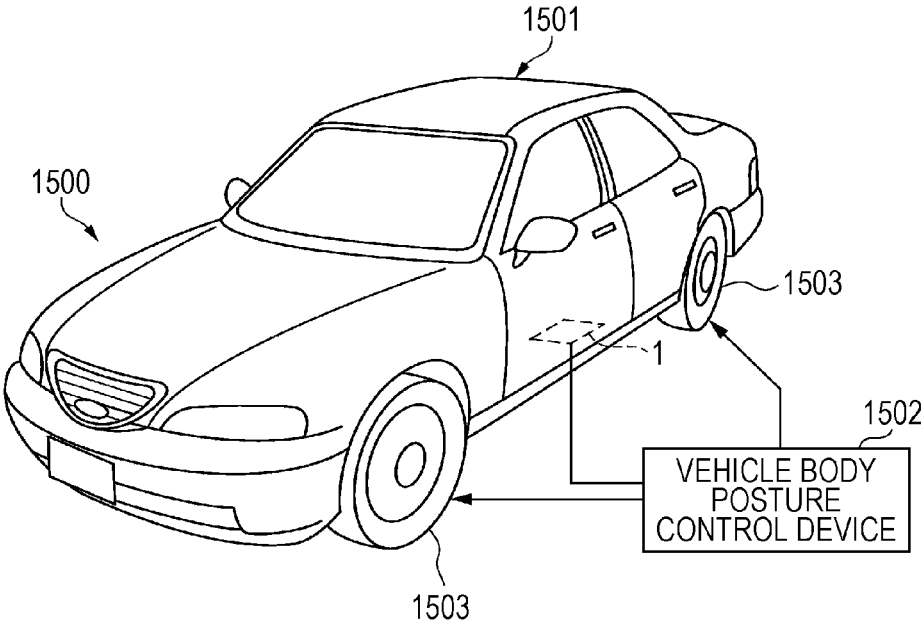


FIG. 8



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**PHYSICAL QUANTITY SENSOR ELEMENT,
PHYSICAL QUANTITY SENSOR,
ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT, AND MOVABLE
BODY**

BACKGROUND

1. Technical Field

The present invention relates to a physical quantity sensor element, a physical quantity sensor, electronic equipment, and a movable body.

2. Related Art

Recently, as a physical quantity sensor element using a silicon micro electro mechanical system (MEMS) technology, for example, a capacitance type gyro sensor element (an angular velocity sensor) for detecting angular velocity has been known (for example, refer to JP-T-2007-509346).

For example, an angular velocity sensor according to JP-T-2007-509346 includes two mass portions which are indirectly connected to a frame thereof. The two mass portions are connected via a link device so as to necessarily move to an opposite direction along a Z direction. It is possible to sense the angular velocity of the sensor about a Y-axis by causing the two mass portions to vibrate through a reverse phase in the Z direction, and measuring amplitude of angular vibration which is applied to the frame.

However, in the angular velocity sensor according to JP-T-2007-509346, end portions of the two mass portions, which are approximated to each other are connected to each other via the link device, and thus the mass portions are inclined to an in-plane direction when driving vibration is performed to an out-plane direction, which results in occurrence of vibration leakage.

SUMMARY

An advantage of some aspects of the invention is to provide a physical quantity sensor element having excellent detection accuracy, or a physical quantity sensor which is provided with the physical quantity sensor element, electronic equipment, and a movable body.

The invention can be realized in the following forms or application examples.

Application Example 1

According to this application example of the invention, there is provided a physical quantity sensor element including: a first mass portion and a second mass portion which are formed into a plane-shape along a reference surface and vibrate in a direction along a normal line of the reference surface; a first supporting portion; a first beam portion for connecting the first mass portion and the first supporting portion with each other; a second supporting portion; a second beam portion for connecting the second mass portion and the second supporting portion with each other; and a coupling portion of which one end portion is connected to a portion in the first mass portion, and the other end portion is connected to a portion in the second mass portion, in which the first mass portion is connected to the one end portion of the coupling portion, and includes a first easily deformable portion which is deformable so as to reduce a change of a posture of the first mass portion with respect to the reference surface, and in which the second mass portion is connected to the other end portion of the coupling portion, and includes a second easily deformable portion which is deformable so

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as to reduce a change of a posture of the second mass portion with respect to the reference surface.

According to the physical quantity sensor element as described above, the coupling portion is connected to the first mass portion and the second mass portion, and thus when exciting the vibration on the first mass portion and the second mass portion through the reverse phase in the direction along the normal line of the reference surface, it is possible to cause the first mass portion and the second mass portion to stably vibrate. Particularly, at the time of perform the vibration, the first easily deformable portion and the second easily deformable portion which are deformable so as to reduce the change of the posture of the first mass portion and the second mass portion with respect to the reference surface, and thus it is possible to reduce the inclination of the first mass portion and the second mass portion with respect to the reference surface, thereby reducing the occurrence of the vibration leakage. As described, the physical quantity sensor element of the invention has the excellent detection accuracy.

Application Example 2

In the physical quantity sensor element according to the application example, it is preferable that the first easily deformable portion and the second easily deformable portion extend along a direction intersecting with a direction in which the first mass portion and the second mass portion are arranged in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface.

As such, it is possible to reduce the change of the posture of the first mass portion and the second mass portion with respect to the reference surface by causing the first easily deformable portion and the second easily deformable portion to be twisted. In this way, it is possible to reduce the change of the posture of the first mass portion and the second mass portion with respect to the reference surface with a relatively simple configuration.

Application Example 3

In the physical quantity sensor element according to the application example, it is preferable that in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface, a width of each of the first easily deformable portion and the second easily deformable portion is smaller than a width of the coupling portion.

As such, it is possible to efficiently reduce the change of the posture of the first mass portion and the second mass portion with respect to the reference surface by causing the first easily deformable portion and the second easily deformable portion to be easily twisted. In addition, it is possible to reduce undesirable deformation of the coupling portion and to stabilize the vibration of the first mass portion and the second mass portion.

Application Example 4

In the physical quantity sensor element according to the application example, it is preferable that the first mass portion includes a first gap which is disposed in the first easily deformable portion, and the second mass portion includes a second gap portion which is disposed in the second easily deformable portion.

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As such, it is possible to collectively form the first easily deformable portion and the second easily deformable portion with the first mass portion and the second mass portion by processing one substrate.

Application Example 5

According to this application example of the invention, there is provided the physical quantity sensor element, further including: a supporting beam portion which is disposed between the first mass portion and the second mass portion, and extend along a direction intersecting with a direction in which the first mass portion and the second mass portion are arranged in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface, in which a middle portion of the coupling portion is supported by the support beam portion.

As such, in accordance with twist deformation of the supporting beam portion, it is possible to stably rotate the coupling portion as the center of the supporting beam portion. As a result, it is possible to realize the stabilization of the vibration of the first mass portion and the second mass portion.

Application Example 6

According to this application example of the invention, there is provided the physical quantity sensor element, further including: a substrate which is disposed along the reference surface; a first fixing portion and a second fixing portion which are fixed onto the substrate; a third beam portion which connects the first fixing portion and the first supporting portion; a fourth beam portion which connects the second fixing portion and the second supporting portion; a first electrode which is provided at a position overlapping the first mass portion in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface; and a second electrode which is provided at a position overlapping the second mass portion in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface.

As such, it is possible to excite the driving vibration on the first mass portion and the second mass portion in the direction along the normal line of the reference surface and to detect the vibration in the direction along the normal line of the reference surface of the first mass portion and the second mass portion by using the first electrode and the second electrode.

Application Example 7

According to this application example of the invention, there is provided the physical quantity sensor element, further including: a first detecting electrode which is fixed onto the substrate and detects vibration in a direction along the reference surface of the first supporting portion; and a second detecting electrode which is fixed onto the substrate and detects vibration in a direction along the reference surface of the second supporting portion.

As such, when exciting the driving vibration on the first mass portion and the second mass portion in the direction along the normal line of the reference surface, it is possible to detect the vibration of the first supporting portion and the second supporting portion due to an action of the Coriolis effect which occurs in the first mass portion and the second mass portion by using the first detecting electrode and the

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second detecting electrode. Therefore, it is possible to realize an angular velocity sensor.

Application Example 8

In the physical quantity sensor element according to the application example, it is preferable that the first easily deformable portion is disposed at a position including a center portion of the first mass portion in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface, and the second easily deformable portion is disposed at a position including a center portion of the second mass portion in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface.

As such, it is possible to efficiently reduce the change of the posture of the first mass portion and the second mass portion with respect to the reference surface.

Application Example 9

According to this application example of the invention, there is provided a physical quantity sensor including the physical quantity sensor element of the above-described application example of the invention, and a package which stores the physical quantity sensor element.

As such, it is possible to provide the physical quantity sensor having the excellent detection accuracy.

Application Example 10

According to this application example of the invention, there is provided electronic equipment including the physical quantity sensor element of the above-described application example of the invention.

As such, it is possible to provide the electronic equipment which includes the physical quantity sensor element having the excellent detection accuracy.

Application Example 11

According to this application example of the invention, there is provided a movable body including the physical quantity sensor element of the above-described application example of the invention.

As such, it is possible to provide the movable body which includes the physical quantity sensor element having the excellent detection accuracy.

BRIEF DESCRIPTION OF THE DRAWINGS

The invention will be described with reference to the accompanying drawings, wherein like numbers reference like elements.

FIG. 1 is a plan view illustrating a physical quantity sensor according to a first embodiment of the invention.

FIG. 2 is a sectional view taken along line IIA-IIA in FIG. 1.

FIG. 3 is a sectional view taken along line IIB-IIB in FIG. 1.

FIG. 4A and FIG. 4B are schematic diagrams for illustrating an operation of the physical quantity sensor illustrated in FIG. 1, and FIG. 4A is a plan view and FIG. 4B is a sectional view.

FIG. 5 is a schematic perspective view of a configuration of a mobile-type personal computer of an example of electronic equipment of the invention.

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FIG. 6 is a schematic perspective view of a configuration of a mobile phone which is an example of the electronic equipment of the invention.

FIG. 7 is a perspective view of a configuration of a digital still camera which is an example of the electronic equipment of the invention.

FIG. 8 is a perspective view of a configuration of a vehicle which is an example of a movable body of the invention.

DESCRIPTION OF EXEMPLARY EMBODIMENTS

Hereinafter, a physical quantity sensor element, a physical quantity sensor, electronic equipment and a movable body of the invention will be described in detail based on preferred embodiments shown in the accompanying drawings.

1. Physical Quantity Sensor

First, an embodiment of the physical quantity sensor (a physical quantity sensor which is provided with a physical quantity sensor element) of the invention will be described.

FIG. 1 is a plan view illustrating the physical quantity sensor according to the first embodiment of the invention, FIG. 2 is a sectional view taken along line IIA-IIA in FIG. 1, and FIG. 3 is a sectional view taken along line IIB-IIB in FIG. 1. In addition, FIG. 4A and FIG. 4B are schematic diagrams for illustrating an operation of the physical quantity sensor illustrated in FIG. 1, and FIG. 4A is a plan view and FIG. 4B is a sectional view.

Meanwhile, in the drawings, for convenience of explanation, three axes of an X-axis (a third axis), a Y-axis (a second axis), and a Z-axis (a first axis) which are orthogonal to each other are indicated by arrows, and a tip end side of the arrow is set to be "+ (positive)", and a base end side is set to be "- (negative)". In addition, in the following description, a direction parallel to the X-axis is referred to as an "X-axis direction", a direction parallel to the Y-axis is referred to as a "Y-axis direction", and a direction parallel to the Z-axis is referred to as a "Z-axis direction". In addition, in the following description, for convenience of explanation, an upper side (a side of the +Z-axis direction) and a lower side (a side of the -Z-axis direction) in FIG. 2 and FIG. 3 are respectively referred to as "up" and "down".

A physical quantity sensor 10 as illustrated in FIG. 1 is a gyro sensor for detecting an angular velocity about the Y-axis. The physical quantity sensor 10 is provided with a physical quantity sensor element 1 which is a gyro element, and a package 11 which stores the physical quantity sensor element 1, as illustrated in FIG. 2 and FIG. 3.

Package

The package 11 is provided with a base substrate 12 (a substrate) for supporting the physical quantity sensor element 1, and a lid member 13 which is bonded to the base substrate 12, and a space for storing the physical quantity sensor element 1 is formed between the base substrate 12 and the lid member 13. Meanwhile, the base substrate 12 may form a portion of the physical quantity sensor element 1.

Each of the base substrate 12 and the lid member 13 is formed into a plane-shape and is disposed along an XY plane (a reference surface) which is a plane including the X-axis and the Y-axis. In addition, a recessed portion 121 which has a function of preventing a vibrating portion (a portion from which a fixing portion 22 of vibration structures 2a and 2b described below is removed) of the physical quantity sensor element 1 from coming in contact with the base substrate 12 is provided on an upper surface (that is, a surface on the side on which the physical quantity sensor

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element 1 is provided) of the base substrate 12. With this, the base substrate 12 can support the physical quantity sensor element 1 while allowing the physical quantity sensor element 1 to be driven. In addition, a recessed portion 131 which is formed so as to cover the physical quantity sensor element 1 in a non-contact manner on the lower surface (that is, a surface on the side which is bonded to the base substrate 12) of the lid member 13 is provided. With this, it is possible to form a space for storing the physical quantity sensor element 1 between the base substrate 12 and the lid member 13 while allowing the physical quantity sensor element 1 to be driven.

Meanwhile, in the drawings, each of the base substrate 12 and the lid member 13 may be formed of one member, or may be formed of two or more members which are bonded together. For example, the base substrate 12 or the lid member 13 may be formed by bonding a frame-shaped member and a plane-shaped member together.

A bonding method of the base substrate 12 and the lid member 13 is different according to the constituent material of the base substrate 12 and the lid member 13, and thus is not particularly limited, for example, it is possible to use a bonding method by using a bonding material such as an adhesive and a brazing material, and a solid bonding method such as a direct bonding method or an anodic bonding method.

In addition, the constituent material of the base substrate 12 is not particularly limited, but it is preferable to use a material having insulating properties, specifically, it is preferable to use a silicon material having high resistance and a glass material, and it is particularly preferable to use a glass material (for example, borosilicate glass such as Pyrex glass (registered trademark)) containing alkali metal ion (a movable ion). Therefore, when the vibration structures 2a and 2b is mainly formed of silicon, it is possible to anodically bond the base substrate 12 and the vibration structures 2a and 2b.

In addition, the constituent material of the lid member 13 is not particularly limited, for example, it is possible to use the same material as that of the aforementioned base substrate 12.

Each of the base substrate 12 and the lid member 13 can be formed by using, for example, a photolithography method and an etching method.

Physical Quantity Sensor Element

The physical quantity sensor element 1 is provided with two vibration structures 2a and 2b, a coupling structure 2c for connecting two of the vibration structures 2a and 2b to each other, two driving fixed electrode portions 3 for exciting the driving vibration on the vibration structures 2a and 2b, four detecting fixed electrode portions 4 for detecting the detecting vibration of the vibration structures 2a and 2b, and two electrodes for driving monitor 5 for detecting a driving state of the vibration structures 2a and 2b. Hereinafter, each portion of the physical quantity sensor element 1 will be described in order.

Vibration Structure

The vibration structures 2a and 2b are arranged in the X-axis direction. The vibration structures 2a and 2b have the same configuration to each other except for being symmetrically disposed in FIG. 1, and each of the vibration structures 2a and 2b is provided with the detecting portion 21, the four fixing portions 22 which are fixed onto the base substrate 12 in the package 11, four beam portions 23 which connect the detecting portion 21 and the four fixing portions 22, a driving portion 24, and four beam portions 25 which connect the detecting portion 21 and the driving portion 24. Here, in the vibration structure 2a, the beam portion 25 corresponds

to a “first beam portion”, the beam portion **23** corresponds to a “third beam portion”, the fixing portion **22** corresponds to a “first fixing portion” the driving portion **24** corresponds to a “first mass portion”, and the detecting portion **21** corresponds to a “first supporting portion”. In addition, in the vibration structure **2b**, the beam portion **25** corresponds to a “second beam portion”, the beam portion **23** corresponds to a “fourth beam portion”, the fixing portion **22** corresponds to a “second fixing portion”, the driving portion **24** corresponds to a “second mass portion”, and the detecting portion **21** corresponds to a “second supporting portion”.

The vibration structures **2a** and **2b** are integrally formed with the structure **2c**. In addition, as a constituent material of the vibration structures **2a** and **2b**, for example, it is possible to use silicon to which conductive property is imparted by being doped with an impurity such as phosphorus or boron. In addition, the vibration structures **2a** and **2b** are collectively formed with the coupling structure **2c** by processing (for example, an etching process) one substrate (for example, a silicon substrate).

Detecting Portion (First and Second Supporting Portions)

The detecting portion **21** of the vibration structures **2a** and **2b** is provided with a frame portion **211** and a detecting movable electrode portion **212** which is provided in the frame portion **211**.

The frame portion **211** is formed into a frame shape in which a part is chipped in the circumferential direction in planar view (hereinafter, simply referred to as “in planar view”) from the Z-axis direction. Specifically, the frame portion **211** is formed of a pair of first portions which extend along the X-axis direction so as to be parallel to each other, the second portion which extends along the Y-axis direction and connects one side of the ends of the pair of the first portion to each other, and a pair of third portion which extend along the Y-axis direction so as to face each other from the other side of the ends of the pair of first portions.

The detecting movable electrode portion **212** is formed of a plurality of electrode fingers which extend along the Y-axis direction from each of the first portions of the aforementioned frame portion **211**. Meanwhile, the number of these electrode fingers may be arbitrary without being limited to the number shown in the drawings.

First and Second Fixing Portions

The four fixing portions **22** of each of the vibration structures **2a** and **2b** are bonded and fixed on the upper surface of the base substrate **12** on the outside of the recessed portion **121** of the base substrate **12** in the package **11**. The bonding method is different according to a constituent material of the base substrate **12** and the fixing portion **22**, and thus is not particularly limited, for example, it is possible to use a solid bonding method such as a direct bonding method or an anodic bonding method.

The four fixing portions **22** are respectively disposed to be spaced from each other at the outside of the detecting portion **21** on the outside of the detecting portion in planar view. In the embodiment, the four fixing portions **22** are disposed at a position corresponding to each of the corner portions (each connecting portion between the first portion, the second portion, and the third portion) of the frame portion **211** of the detecting portion **21** in planar view.

Third and Fourth Beam Portions

The four beam portions **23** of each of the vibration structures **2a** and **2b** correspond to each of the corner portions of the frame portion **211** of the detecting portion in planar view, and each of four beam portions **23** is connected to the corresponding to detecting portion **21** and the fixing portion **22**.

Each of the beam portions **23** is formed into a meandering shape which extends along the X-axis direction while reciprocating in the Y-axis direction, in planar view. With this, it is possible to increase the length of each of the beam portions **23** while still realizing miniaturization. It is possible to easily displace the detecting portion **21** in the X-axis direction in accordance with bending deformation of each of the beam portions **23** by increasing the length of each of the beam portions **23**.

Here, each of the beam portions **23** includes a portion which extends along the Y-axis direction, and a portion which extends along the X-axis direction, but the length of the portion which extends along the Y-axis direction is longer than the length of the portion which extends along the X-axis direction. With this, the bending deformation of each of the beam portions **23** is reduced in the Y-axis direction, and thus it is possible to reduce the displacement of the detecting portion **21** in accordance with the bending deformation of each of the beam portions **23** in the Y-axis direction.

Note that, each of the beam portions **23** may not be formed into the meandering shape as described above, and, for example, may be formed into a shape which extends along the Y-axis direction in planar view.

In addition, the width (the length which extends along the X-axis direction) of each of the beam portions **23** is smaller than the thickness (the length which extends along the Z-axis direction) of each of the beam portions **23**. In other words, the thickness of each of the beam portions **23** is larger than the width of each of the beam portions **23**. With this, each of the beam portions **23** is likely to be bent and deformed in the X-axis direction, and is not likely to be bent and deformed in the Z-axis direction. That is, a spring constant of each of the beam portions **23** in the Z-axis direction is larger than the spring constant of each of the beam portions **23** in the X-axis direction. For this reason, it is possible to reduce the displacement of the detecting portion **21** in the Z-axis direction while allowing the detecting portion **21** to be easily displaced to the X-axis direction in accordance with the bending deformation of each of the beam portions **23**. Note that, the spring constants of the entire beam portions **23** in the Z-axis direction are larger than the spring constants of the entire beam portions **23** in the X-axis direction.

Driving Portion (First and Second Mass Portions)

The driving portion **24** of each of the vibration structures **2a** and **2b** is disposed on the inside of the frame portion **211** of the detecting portion **21**. When the upper surface of the base substrate **12** in the package **11** is set to be a reference surface, the driving portion **24** is formed into a plane-shape which extends along the reference surface. In the embodiment, the driving portion **24** is formed into a rectangular shape which extends along the shape of the frame portion **211**.

In addition, the beam portion **29** which extends along the Y-axis direction is provided in the driving portion **24**. Both ends of each of the beam portions **29** are fixed to the corresponding driving portion **24**. Here, the driving portion **24** is provided with a gap portion **241** in which the beam portion **29** is disposed. Note that, the gap portion **241** of one the driving portion **24** corresponds to a “first gap portion”, and the gap portion **241** of the other driving portion **24** corresponds to a “second gap portion”.

First and Second Beam Portions

The four beam portions **25** of each of the vibration structures **2a** and **2b** correspond to four corner portions of the frame portion **211** and four corner portions of the driving

portion 24, and each of the four beam portions 25 connects the corresponding detecting portion 21 and the driving portion 24.

Each of the beam portions 25 is formed into a meandering shape which extends along the Y-axis direction while reciprocating in the X-axis direction. With this, it is possible to increase the length of the beam portions 25 while realizing miniaturization. In addition, it is possible to easily displace the driving portion 24 in the Z-axis direction in accordance with the bending deformation of each of the beam portions 25 by increasing each of the beam portions 25.

Here, each of the beam portions 25 is provided with a portion (a first portion) which extends along in the X-axis direction, and a portion (a second portion) which extends along the Y-axis direction, but the length of the portion which extends along the X-axis direction is longer than the length of the portion which extends along the Y-axis direction. With this, the bending deformation of each of the beam portions 25 is reduced in the X-axis direction, and thus it is possible to reduce the displacement of the driving portion 24 in accordance with the bending deformation of each of the beam portions 25 in the X-axis direction. For this reason, it is possible to efficiently transfer a force influenced by the Coriolis effect which acts in the driving portion 24 in the X-axis direction to the detecting portion 21 via the beam portion 25. In addition, in each of the beam portions 25, while a portion of each of the beam portions 25, which extends along the X-axis direction is to be twisted and bent when the driving portion 24 is displaced to the Z-axis direction, a portion of each of the beam portions 25, which extends along the Y-axis direction is inclined to the Z-axis direction. At this time, the portion of each of the beam portions 25, which extends in the Y-axis direction is not significantly deformed; however, the portion of each of the beam portions 25 is inclined as described above, and thus functions as a displacement expanding mechanism for expanding the displacement of the driving portion 24 in the Z-axis direction in accordance with the length in the aforementioned portion.

In addition, by decreasing the length of the portion of each of the beam portions 25, which extends along the Y-axis direction, it is possible to reduce a gap between the portions of the beam portions 25, which extend along the X-axis direction, a gap between the portion of each of the beam portions 25, which extends along the X-axis direction and the detecting portion 21, and a gap between the portion of each of the beam portions 25, which extends along the X-axis direction and the driving portion 24. With this, it is possible to regulate or limit the bending deformation of each of the beam portions 25 in the Y-axis direction, and as a result, it is possible to reduce the displacement of the driving portion 24 in the Y-axis direction.

In addition, the length of each of the beam portions 25 is longer than the length of each of the beam portions 23. With this, each of the beam portions 25 is likely to be bent and deformed in the Z-axis direction compared to each of the beam portions 23. That is, the spring constant of each of the beam portions 25 in the Z-axis direction is smaller than the spring constant of each of the beam portions 23 in the Z-axis direction. In addition, from the aspect of the same purpose, the thickness of each of the beam portions 25 is smaller than the thickness of each of the beam portions 23. Meanwhile, since the number of the beam portions 25 is the same as the number of the beam portions 23, the spring constants of the entire beam portions 25 in the Z-axis direction is smaller than the spring constants of the entire beam portions 23 in the Z-axis direction.

Coupling Structure

The coupling structure 2c is disposed between the two vibration structures 2a and 2b. The coupling structure 2c is provided with two fixing portions 26, a support beam portion 27 for connecting the two fixing portions 26 to each other, and a coupling portion 28 which is supported by the support beam portion 27 and couples the beam portions 29 of the vibration structures 2a and 2b with each other.

The two fixing portions 26 are arranged in the Y-axis direction. Then, the support beam portion 27 for connecting the two fixing portions 26 to each other extends in the Y-axis direction. In addition, the coupling portion 28 extends in the X-axis direction, and one end portion is connected to a middle portion of one beam portion 29 and the other end portion is connected to a middle portion of the other beam portion 29. In addition, in planar view, the coupling portion 28 and the support beam portion 27 intersect with each other, and thus a middle portion of the coupling portion 28 is connected to a middle portion of the support beam portion 27.

Driving Fixed Electrode

Each of the two driving fixed electrode portions 3 is fixed on the bottom surface of the recessed portion 121 which is formed on the base substrate 12 in the package 11. Each of the driving fixed electrode portions 3 is disposed to face the corresponding driving portion 24 at a predetermined interval. Here, each of the driving fixed electrode portions 3 is disposed at a position overlapping the corresponding driving portion 24 in planar view. In the embodiment, each of the driving fixed electrode portions 3 is formed into a substantially annular shape along the outer periphery of the corresponding driving portion 24 in planar view.

The driving fixed electrode portion 3 is electrically connected to a terminal 32 which is provided on the outer side of the recessed portion 121 on the upper surface of the base substrate 12 via a wiring 31.

Examples of a constituent material of each of the driving fixed electrode portion 3, the wiring 31, and the terminal 32 include a transparent electrode material such as ITO (indium tin oxide), and a metallic material such as ZnO (zinc oxide), gold (Au), a gold alloy, platinum (Pt), aluminum (Al), an aluminum alloy, silver (Ag), a silver alloy, chromium (Cr), a chrome alloy, copper (Cu), molybdenum (Mo), niobium (Nb), tungsten (W), iron (Fe), titanium (Ti), cobalt (Co), zinc (Zn), and zirconium (Zr).

In addition, the driving fixed electrode portion 3, the wiring 31, and the terminal 32 are collectively formed by patterning a film, which is formed by using the aforementioned material and through a gas phase deposition method such as a sputtering method, and a vapor deposition method, or through a photolithography method and an etching method. Meanwhile, in a case where the base substrate 12 is formed of a semiconductor material such as silicon, it is preferable that an insulating layer is provided between the driving fixed electrode portion 3, the wiring 31, the terminal 32, and the base substrate 12. Examples of the constituent material of the insulating layer include SiO₂ (silicon oxide), AlN (aluminum nitride), SiN (silicon nitride), and the like.

Detecting Fixed Electrode

Each of the four detecting fixed electrode portions is bonded and fixed onto the upper surface of the base substrate 12 on the outer side of the recessed portion 121 of the base substrate 12 in the package 11. The four detecting fixed electrode portions 4 are formed of two detecting fixed electrode portions 4 (a first detecting electrode) for detecting the detected vibration of the vibration structure 2a, and two detecting fixed electrode portions 4 (a second detecting

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electrode) for detecting the detecting vibration of the vibration structure **2b**. The two detecting fixed electrode portions **4** for detecting the detecting vibration of the vibration structure **2a** are arranged in the Y-axis direction so as to interpose the vibration structures **2a** therebetween. In the same manner, the two detecting fixed electrode portions **4** for detecting the detecting vibration of the vibration structure **2b** are arranged in the Y-axis direction so as to interpose the vibration structures **2b** therebetween.

These four detecting fixed electrode portions **4** are collectively formed with the two vibration structures **2a** and **2b**, and the coupling structure **2c** by processing (for example, an etching process) one substrate (for example, a silicone substrate).

Each of the detecting fixed electrode portions **4** is formed of a plurality of electrode fingers **41** and a plurality of electrode fingers **42** which are arranged to be adjacent to each other in the X-axis direction, and a connecting portion **43** which connects end portions to each other on the side opposite to the vibration structures **2a** and **2b** of a plurality of electrode fingers **42**.

Each of the electrode fingers **41** and **42** extends along the Y-axis direction. Thus, each of the electrode fingers **41** faces one side surface of the electrode finger of the detecting movable electrode portion **212**, and each of the electrode fingers **42** faces the other side surface of the electrode finger of the detecting movable electrode portion **212**. When each of the electrode fingers **41** and **42** is disposed in this way, and thus the detecting portion **21** is displaced to the X-axis direction, and among an electrostatic capacity between the electrode finger **41** and the electrode finger of the detecting movable electrode portion **212**, and an electrostatic capacity between the electrode finger **42** and the electrode finger of the detecting movable electrode portion **212**, one electrostatic capacity is increased, and the other electrostatic capacity is decreased.

The connecting portion **43** has a function of securing conduction between the plurality of electrode fingers **42**. With this, it is possible to enhance the reliability of the electrical connection between each of the electrode fingers **42** and a wiring **44** described below.

Such a detecting fixed electrode portion **4** is electrically connected to a terminal **45** which is provided on the outside of the recessed portion **121** on the upper surface of the base substrate **12** via the wiring **44**. A constituent material and a method of forming the wiring **44** and the terminal **45** are the same those in the driving fixed electrode portion **3**, the wiring **31**, and the terminal **32**.

Electrode for Driving Monitor

Each of the two electrodes for driving monitor **5** is bonded and fixed onto the bottom surface of the recessed portion **121** which is formed on the base substrate **12** in the package **11**. Each of the electrodes for driving monitor **5** is disposed to face the corresponding driving portion **24** at a predetermined interval. Here, each of the electrodes for driving monitor **5** is disposed at a position overlapping the corresponding driving portion **24** in planar view. In the embodiment, each of the electrodes for driving monitor **5** is disposed on the inside of the driving fixed electrode portion **3** which is formed into the aforementioned annular shape in planar view, and overlaps the center portion of the corresponding driving portion **24**.

Such an electrode for driving monitor **5** is electrically connected to the terminal **52** which is provided on the outside of the recessed portion **121** on the upper surface of the base substrate **12** via a wiring **51**.

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A constituent material and a method of forming the method of the electrode for driving monitor **5**, the wiring **51**, and the terminal **52** are the same those in the driving fixed electrode portion **3**, the wiring **31**, and the terminal **32**.

The physical quantity sensor **10** which is configured as described above, is operated as follows.

A periodically changing voltage (for example, an AC voltage) is applied as the driving voltage between the driving fixed electrode portion **3** and the driving portion **24** which face to each other. Then, an electrostatic attraction force having a strength that is periodically changed occurs between the driving fixed electrode portion **3** and the driving portion **24**, and thereby, the driving portion **24** vibrates in the Z-axis direction in accordance with the elastic deformation of the beam portion **25**.

At this time, a voltage which is applied between the driving fixed electrode portion **3** of the vibration structure **2a** and the driving portion **24**, and a voltage which is applied between the driving fixed electrode portion **3** of the vibration structure **2b** and the driving portion **24** have shifted phases by 180° in relation to each other from each other. With this, the driving portion **24** of the vibration structure **2a** and the driving portion **24** of the vibration structure **2b** vibrate through a reverse phase. That is, as illustrated in FIG. 4B, a state where the aforementioned one driving portion **24** is displaced to a direction $\alpha 1$ which corresponds to a +Z-axis direction, and the aforementioned other driving portion **24** is displaced to a direction $\alpha 2$ which corresponds to a -Z-axis direction, and a state where the aforementioned one driving portion **24** is displaced to a direction $\alpha 2$, and the aforementioned other driving portion **24** is displaced to a direction $\alpha 1$ are alternately repeated. With this, it is possible to reduce leakage vibration. Meanwhile, FIG. 4B illustrates a case where the driving portion **24** on the left side of the drawing is displaced to the direction $\alpha 1$, and the driving portion **24** on the right side of the drawing is displaced to the direction $\alpha 2$.

In addition, at this time, the coupling portion **28** is inclined while the support beam portion **27** is twisted about an axis **a** which extends along the Y-axis direction. With this, it is possible to cause the driving portion **24** to vibrate such that amplitude of each of the two driving portions **24** which are connected to both ends of the coupling portion **28**. At that time, the beam portion **29** of one driving portion **24** is twisted about the axis **a1** which extends along the Y-axis direction while the beam portion **29** of the other driving portion **24** is twisted about the axis **a2** which extends along the Y-axis direction. Here, one end portion of the coupling portion **28** is connected to a portion on the inside of one driving portion **24** (the first mass portion), and the other end portion of the coupling portion **28** is connected to a portion on the inside of the other driving portion **24** (the second mass portion). Accordingly, in accordance with the twist deformation of the beam portion **29** described above, it is possible to keep a state where each of the driving portions **24** are parallel to the XY plane.

As described above, by using the driving fixed electrode portion **3** which is provided at a portion overlapping one driving portion **24** in planar view, and the driving fixed electrode portion **3** which is provided at a portion overlapping the other driving portion **24** in planar view it is possible to excite the driving vibration on the driving portion **24** in the direction along a normal line of the reference surface.

In addition, at this time, the electrostatic capacity between the electrode for driving monitor **5** and the driving portion **24** is detected, and then, based on the detection result, a driving voltage is controlled as required. Therefore, it is

possible to control in such a manner that the vibration of the driving portion 24 becomes a desired vibration. Further, it is possible to detect the vibration of the driving portion 24 in the direction along a normal line of the reference surface by using the each of the driving fixed electrode portions 3.

As described above, in a state of causing the driving portion 24 to vibrate, if the angular velocity about the Y-axis is applied to the physical quantity sensor 10, the Coriolis effect acts in the driving portion 24 in the X-axis direction, and thus the detecting portion 21 vibrates in the X-axis direction due to an action of the Coriolis effect. That is, as illustrated in FIG. 4A, a state where one detecting portion 21 is displaced to a direction $\beta 1$ which corresponds to a +X-axis direction, and the other detecting portions 21 is displaced to a direction $\beta 2$ which corresponds to a -X-axis direction, and a state where the aforementioned one detecting portion 21 is displaced to the direction $\beta 2$, and the other detecting portion 21 is displaced to the direction $\beta 1$ are alternately repeated. With this, the electrostatic capacity between the electrode fingers 41 and 42 of the detecting fixed electrode portion 4 and the electrode finger of the detecting movable electrode portion 212 is changed. Accordingly, it is possible to detect the angular velocity which is applied to the physical quantity sensor 10 based the electrostatic capacity.

At this time, among a gap g1 between the electrode finger 41 and the electrode finger of the detecting movable electrode portion 212, and a gap g2 between the electrode finger 42 and the electrode finger of the detecting movable electrode portion 212, one of the gaps is large and the other one is small. Therefore, regarding the electrostatic capacity between the electrode finger 41 and the electrode finger of the detecting movable electrode portion 212, and the electrostatic capacity between the electrode finger 42 and the electrode finger of the detecting movable electrode portion 212, when one electrostatic capacity is increased, the other electrostatic capacity is decreased. Therefore, it is possible to obtain a high output detection signal by differentially amplifying these electrostatic capacities. As a result, it is possible to detect the angular velocity with high accuracy.

As described above, when exciting the driving vibration on the two driving portions 24 in the direction along the normal line of the reference surface, it is possible to detect the vibration of two detecting portions 21 by the action of the Coriolis effect in the two driving portions 24 by using the four detecting fixed electrode portions 4. For this reason, it is possible to realize an angular velocity sensor by the physical quantity sensor 10.

As described above, in the physical quantity sensor 10, the coupling portion 28 is connected to one driving portion 24 (a first mass portion) and the other driving portion 24 (a second mass portion), and thus, when these two driving portions 24 are caused to vibrate through a reverse phase in the Z-axis direction, it is possible that the two driving portions 24 are caused to stably vibrate.

Particularly, one end portion of the coupling portion 28 is connected to a portion in one driving portion (the first mass portion), and the other end portion of the coupling portion 28 is connected to a portion in the other driving portion 24 (the second mass portion). In addition, the beam portion 29 of one driving portion 24 functions as a "first easily deformable portion" which is deformable so as to reduce the change of posture of the one driving portion 24 with respect to an XY plane corresponding to a reference surface. In the same manner, the beam portion 29 of the other driving portion 24 functions as a "second easily deformable portion" which is

deformable so as to reduce the change of posture of the other driving portion 24 with respect to an XY plane corresponding to a reference surface.

Accordingly, when the two driving portions 24 are caused to vibrate through the reverse phase in the Z-axis direction, each of the beam portions 29 is deformed so as to reduce the change of the posture of the two driving portions 24 with respect to XY plane, for example, the inclination of the first mass portion and the second mass portion with respect to the reference surface is reduced, and thus it is possible to reduce the leakage vibration. From the above description, the physical quantity sensor element 1 and the physical quantity sensor 10 have the excellent detection accuracy.

Here, each of the beam portions 29 extends along the direction (the Y-axis direction) intersecting with the direction (the X-axis direction) in which the two driving portions 24 are arranged in planar view. With this, it is possible to reduce the change of the posture of the two driving portions 24 with respect to the XY plane by twisting each of the beam portions 29. As such, it is possible to reduce the change of the posture of the two driving portions with respect to the XY plane with a relatively simple configuration.

In addition, the beam portions 29 is disposed at a position including the center portion of the corresponding driving portion 24 in planar view. Therefore, it is possible to efficiently reduce the change of the posture of the two driving portions 24 with respect to the XY plane with a relatively simple configuration.

Further, in planar view, the width of each of the beam portions 29 is smaller than the width of the coupling portion 28. With this, it is easy to twist the first easily deformable portion and the second easily deformable portion, and thus it is possible to effectively reduce the change of the posture of the two driving portions 24 with respect to the reference surface. In addition, it is possible to reduce undesirable deformation of the coupling portion 28 and to stabilize the vibration of the two driving portions 24.

In addition, as described above, each of the driving portions 24 includes a gap portion 241 in which a beam portion 29 is disposed. Therefore, it is possible to collectively form two beam portions 29 with two driving portions 24 by processing one substrate. Each of the gap portions 241 prevents the coupling portion 28 from coming in contact with the driving portion 24 while allowing the beam portion 29 to be twisted.

In addition, in planar view, the middle portion of the coupling portion 28 is supported by the support beam portion 27, and thus it is possible to stably rotate the coupling portion 28 around the support beam portion 27 in accordance with the twist deformation the support beam portion 27. As a result, it is possible to stabilize the vibration of the two driving portions 24.

2. Electronic Equipment

Next, the electronic equipment using the physical quantity sensor element 1 will be specifically described based on FIG. 5 to FIG. 7.

FIG. 5 is a perspective view of a configuration of a mobile phone which is a mobile-type personal computer of the equipment of the invention.

In FIG. 5, a personal computer 1100 is formed of a main body portion 1104 which is provided with a key board 1102, and a display unit 1106 which is provided with a display 1108, and the display unit 1106 is rotatably supported with respect to a main body portion 1104 via a hinge structure. The physical quantity sensor element 1 which functions as a gyro sensor is built into the personal computer 1100.

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FIG. 6 is a perspective view of a configuration of a mobile phone which is an example of the equipment of the invention.

In FIG. 6, the mobile phone 1200 is provided with a plurality of operation buttons 1202, an ear piece 1204, and a mouth piece 1206, and a display 1208 is disposed between the operation button 1202 and the ear piece 1204. The physical quantity sensor element 1 which functions as a gyro sensor is built into the mobile phone 1200.

FIG. 7 is a perspective view of a configuration of a digital still camera which is an example of the equipment of the invention. In addition, in FIG. 7 simply illustrates the connection to the external device. Here, in a general camera, a silver salt film is exposed to the light by an optical image of the object, whereas in the digital still camera 1300, the optical image of the object is by photoelectrically converted into an imaging signal (an image signal) by using an imaging element such as a charge coupled device (CCD).

The display is provided on the back surface of the case (body) 1302 in digital still camera 1300, and is configured to display based on the image signal by using the CCD, and the display 1310 is functions as a finder for displaying the object as an electronic image.

In addition, a light receiving unit 1304 which includes an optical lens (an imaging optical system), the CCD, and the like is provided on the front side (on the rear surface side in FIG. 7) of the case 1302.

When a photographer confirms a target image displayed on the display, and presses a shutter button 1306, an image signal of the CCD is transferred and stored in the memory 1308.

In addition, in the digital still camera 1300, a video signal output terminal 1312, and an input and output terminal 1314 for data communication are provided on the side surface of the case 1302. In addition, as illustrated in FIG. 10, a television monitor 1430 is connected to the video signal output terminal 1312, and a personal computer 1440 is connected to the input and output terminal 1314 for data communication, as required. Further, through a predetermined operation, the image signal stored in the memory 1308 is output from the television monitor 1430 or the personal computer 1440.

The physical quantity sensor element 1 which functions as the gyro sensor is built into the digital still camera 1300.

Note that, in addition to the personal computer (a mobile-type personal computer) in FIG. 5, the mobile phone in FIG. 6, and the digital still camera in FIG. 7, examples of the electronic equipment which is provided with the physical quantity sensor element of the invention include an ink jet ejecting device (for example, an ink jet printer), a laptop personal computer, a television, a video camera, a video tape recorder, a car navigation device, a pager, an electronic notebook (including communication functions), an electronic dictionary, an electronic calculator, an electronic game device, a word processor, a workstation, a videophone, a security television monitor, an electronic binocular, a POS terminal, medical equipment (for example, an electronic thermometer, a blood pressure monitor, a blood glucose meter, an electrocardiogram measuring device, an ultrasonic diagnostic device, and an electronic endoscope), a fish finder, various measuring devices, an instrument (for example, a vehicle, an aircraft, and a ship gauge), a flight simulator, and the like.

3. Movable Body

Next, a movable body by using the physical quantity sensor element 1 will be specifically described based on FIG. 8.

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FIG. 8 is a perspective view of a configuration of a vehicle which is an example of a movable body of the invention.

The physical quantity sensor element 1 which functions as a gyro sensor is built into a vehicle 1500, and it is possible to detect posture of a vehicle body 1501 by the physical quantity sensor element 1. The detected signal from the physical quantity sensor element 1 is supplied a vehicle body posture control device 1502, and the vehicle body posture control device 1502 detects the posture of the vehicle body 1501 based on the detected signal, and thus it is possible to control the hardness of suspension according to a detection result and to control the brake of each of wheels 1503. In addition, it is possible to control the posture by using a bipedal robot and a radio-controlled helicopter. As described above, in order to realize the posture control of the various movable bodies, the physical quantity sensor element 1 is built into the vehicle 1500.

As described above, the physical quantity sensor element, the physical quantity sensor, the electronic equipment, and the movable body of the invention are described with reference to the drawings of the embodiments; however, the invention is not limited thereto. For example, the configuration of each portion can be replaced with any configuration which exhibits the same function in the invention. In addition, any other components may be added to the invention.

The entire disclosure of Japanese Patent Application No. 2014-181046, filed Sep. 5, 2014 is expressly incorporated by reference herein.

What is claimed is:

1. A physical quantity sensor element comprising:
 - a first mass and a second mass which are formed into a plane-shape along a reference surface and vibrate in a direction along a normal line of the reference surface;
 - a substrate which is disposed along the reference surface;
 - a first anchor and a second anchor which are fixed onto the substrate;
 - a first support;
 - a first beam for connecting the first mass and the first support with each other;
 - a second support;
 - a second beam for connecting the second mass and the second support with each other;
 - a third beam for connecting the first mass and the first support with each other;
 - a fourth beam for connecting the second mass and the second support with each other;
 - a coupling portion of which one end is connected to a portion in the first mass, and the other end is connected to a portion in the second mass,
 - a fifth beam which connects the first anchor and the first support;
 - a sixth beam which connects the second anchor and the second support;
 - a first electrode which is provided at a position overlapping the first mass in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface; and
 - a second electrode which is provided at a position overlapping the second mass in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface, wherein the first mass is connected to the one end of the coupling portion, and includes a first easily deformable portion which is deformable so as to reduce a change of a posture of the first mass with respect to the reference surface,
 - wherein the second mass is connected to the other end of the coupling portion, and includes a second easily

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deformable portion which is deformable so as to reduce a change of a posture of the second mass with respect to the reference surface,
 wherein the coupling portion extends within a portion of the first mass on the one end and extends within a portion of the second mass on the other end,
 wherein the first beam is disposed on a first side of the first mass and the third beam is disposed on a second side of the first mass opposing to the first side, and the portion of the first mass in which the coupling portion extends is disposed on a side different than the first side and the second side, and
 wherein the second beam is disposed on a third side of the second mass, and the fourth beam is disposed on a fourth side of the second mass opposing to the third side, and the portion of the second mass in which the coupling portion extends is disposed on a side different than the third side and the fourth side.

2. The physical quantity sensor element according to claim 1,
 wherein the first easily deformable portion and the second easily deformable portion extend along a direction intersecting with a direction in which the first mass and the second mass are arranged in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface.

3. The physical quantity sensor element according to claim 2,
 wherein in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface, a width of each of the first easily deformable portion and the second easily deformable portion is smaller than a width of the coupling portion.

4. The physical quantity sensor element according to claim 1,
 wherein the first mass includes a first gap in which is disposed the first easily deformable portion, and wherein the second mass includes a second gap in which is disposed the second easily deformable portion.

5. The physical quantity sensor element according to claim 1, further comprising:
 a beam support which is disposed between the first mass and the second mass, and extends along a direction intersecting with a direction in which the first mass and the second mass are arranged in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface,
 wherein a middle portion of the coupling portion is supported by the beam support.

6. The physical quantity sensor element according to claim 1, further comprising:
 a first detecting electrode which is fixed onto the substrate and detects vibration in a direction along the reference surface of the first support; and
 a second detecting electrode which is fixed onto the substrate and detects vibration in a direction along the reference surface of the second support.

7. The physical quantity sensor element according to claim 1,
 wherein the first easily deformable portion is disposed at a position including a center portion of the first mass in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface, and
 wherein the second easily deformable portion is disposed at a position including a center portion of the second mass in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface.

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8. A physical quantity sensor comprising:
 the physical quantity sensor element according to claim 1;
 and
 a package which stores the physical quantity sensor element.

9. A physical quantity sensor element comprising:
 a first mass and a second mass which are formed into a plane-shape along a reference surface and vibrate in a direction along a normal line of the reference surface;
 a substrate which is disposed along the reference surface;
 a first anchor and a second anchor which are fixed onto the substrate;
 a first support;
 a first beam for connecting the first mass and the first support;
 a second support;
 a second beam for connecting the second mass and the second support;
 a third beam for connecting the first mass and the first support;
 a fourth beam for connecting the second mass and the second support;
 a coupler of which a first end is connected to the first mass, and a second end is connected to the second mass;
 a seventh beam which connects the first anchor and the first support;
 an eighth beam which connects the second anchor and the second support;
 a first electrode which is provided at a position overlapping the first mass in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface; and
 a second electrode which is provided at a position overlapping the second mass in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface,
 wherein the first mass is connected to the first end of the coupler, and includes a fifth beam which extends in a direction intersecting with a direction in which the coupler extends,
 wherein the second mass is connected to the second end of the coupler, and includes a sixth beam which extends in a direction intersecting with a direction in which the coupler extends,
 wherein the coupler extends within a portion of the first mass on the first end and extends within a portion of the second mass on the second end,
 wherein the first beam is disposed on a first side of the first mass and the third beam is disposed on a second side of the first mass opposing to the first side, and the portion of the first mass in which the coupler extends is disposed on a side different than the first side and the second side, and
 wherein the second beam is disposed on a third side of the second mass, and the fourth beam is disposed on a fourth side of the second mass opposing the third side, and the portion of the second mass in which the coupler extends is disposed on a side different than the third side and the fourth side.

10. The physical quantity sensor element according to claim 9,
 wherein in planar view seen from the direction along the normal line of the reference surface, a width of each of the fifth beam and the sixth beam is smaller than a width of the coupler.

11. The physical quantity sensor element according to claim 9,

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wherein the first mass includes a first gap in which is disposed the fifth beam, and wherein the second mass includes a second gap in which is disposed the sixth beam.

12. The physical quantity sensor element according to claim 9, further comprising:

a support beam which is disposed between the first mass and the second mass, and extends along a direction intersecting with a direction in which the first mass and the second mass are arranged in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface,

wherein a middle portion of the coupler is supported by the support beam.

13. The physical quantity sensor element according to claim 9, further comprising:

a first detecting electrode which is fixed onto the substrate and detects vibration in a direction along the reference surface of the first support; and

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a second detecting electrode which is fixed onto the substrate and detects vibration in a direction along the reference surface of the second support.

14. The physical quantity sensor element according to claim 9,

wherein the seventh beam is disposed at a position including a center portion of the first mass in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface, and

wherein the eighth beam is disposed at a position including a center portion of the second mass in planar view seen from a direction along the normal line of the reference surface.

15. A physical quantity sensor comprising: the physical quantity sensor element according to claim 9; and

a package which stores the physical quantity sensor element.

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